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between columns *a* and *b* and belonging to column *a* was mistakenly inserted in column *b* at the point opposite which it stood. From a study and comparison of several supposed cases of this kind, the height of the columns and the length of the lines in the columns are determined. As the result of such a process Peiser obtains as the original text four columns, each of twenty-eight lines, each line constituting a complete poetical verse. From this original a copy was made incorporating the glosses and additions which had grown up around the original text. This copy was written in four columns of thirty-one lines each, each line containing about seventeen letters, with words incomplete at the close of a line completed at the opening of the following line. From this also a copy was made which incorporated still further glosses; and from this again was made a copy in two columns of fifty or sixty lines each. On the basis of this third copy were prepared two more copies, one of which forms the basis of the Massoretic text, and the other the basis of the Greek. Dr. Peiser furnishes a transliteration and translation of the "original" text, with textual and critical notes and two tables, one showing the arrangement of the original text, the other reproducing the first copy made from it. Opportunity is thus provided for a careful test of the theory as actually applied.

On the basis of some resemblance in phraseology between Hab. 1: 14; 2: 2, 5 ff., 9-14, and Assyro-Babylonian literature, especially the Account of the Deluge, Peiser declares Habakkuk to have been familiar with the cuneiform literature in its original script. Further, he supposes him to have been a Hebrew prince, perhaps a son or grandson of Manasseh, resident as a hostage in Nineveh at the time when the Medes and Babylonians first attacked the city, viz., 625 B. C. At the time of the writing of the book the second advance of the Medes and Babylonians was drawing near. The exact date is fixed as 609 B. C., first by the fact of Josiah's death in that year, which calamity was probably the occasion of the lamentation uttered in this prophecy; second, by the fact that Madyas, the Scythian leader, was slain in that year in an attempt to relieve Nineveh from the siege of the Medes; and Madyas is the prince whose overthrow is alluded to in Hab. 2: 13.

The Virgin Birth of Jesus.

It is interesting to observe that this subject has been made the theme of three articles in the current issues of as many different maga-

zines. One article is by Rev. Alexander Brown, M.A., in the *London Quarterly Review* for April; another is by Rev. N. J. D. White, in the *Expositor* for March; and the third is by Professor Sanday, of Oxford University, in the April *Expository Times*. The three articles are written for the purpose of defending the traditional interpretation of this event in opposition to an increasing tendency among scholars to question in one way or another the precise historical facts, as particularly expressed in an article by the author of the once famous *Supernatural Religion*, Mr. W. R. Cassells, in the *Nineteenth Century and After* for January. Professor Sanday is of the opinion that the account which we have in Luke is derived from Mary herself. The source, however, which Luke had for this information was a document marked by archaic features, the account containing a "certain womanliness of tone," and appearing to stand in some special relation to Mary. He ventures the theory that Mary had communicated this information to Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, who is mentioned twice in the third gospel; and that through her the story was handed down until it found a place in a document rehearsing events connected with the court of Herod.

The facts concerning the virgin birth were not, however, in Dr. Sanday's opinion, in common circulation in Jesus' day, for the people of Nazareth and of Capernaum looked upon Joseph, who by that time was no longer living, as his human father, and Jesus did not go out of his way to correct them. It is highly probable at this time that the apostles themselves knew no better; they just shared the common mode of speech with their neighbors, and this continued for some years after the resurrection. It came to the light at a later time, and furnished a most important explanation of the uniqueness of Christ. He thinks that the divergence between the accounts of Luke and Matthew strengthen rather than weaken the central point of both, namely, the special operation of the Holy Spirit as described. With regard to the purpose of God in the selection of this mode for the creation of his Son, Dr. Sanday says: I am always very reluctant to use the word "must" in connection with any dispensation of God—to say that it "must" have taken place in one particular way and in no other. God sees not as man sees, and his resources are infinite—beyond our power even to imagine. But when we are told, on what seems to be such good authority, that his way of bringing his first-begotten into the world was through birth from a virgin, we can at least assent to its fitness for the end in view. If we try to throw our-

selves back into the spirit of the time and ask what other method would be so intelligible to men of all classes and degrees of culture, we must answer, None. And when I say "so intelligible," I mean, what other method would so invest the act of incarnation with the associations of perfect sinlessness and purity? I do not think that we are able to conceive of any other method that would do this. That he should be "born without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin," is a truth to which our hearts instinctively respond.

The Objective Aspect of the Lord's Supper.

Writing upon this subject in the *Expositor* for March, Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, of Aberdeen, states what he conceives to be the necessary conception of the Lord's Supper. Stating it in a negative form first, he says: We cannot accept any theory which of necessity involves that the first celebration in the upper room was not a true communion; nor any theory which implies that by participating in the Lord's Supper unbelievers receive a spiritual gift; nor any theory which views the eucharist as primarily a human performance rather than a divine means of grace. The doctrine of the Lord's Supper on its objective side, to which we are brought by this process of elimination, may be stated broadly as follows: In receiving with faith the symbols of Christ's flesh and blood we receive Christ himself. The whole is a spiritual transaction between persons, a spiritual conveyance of Christ to the soul of the believer. We feed upon him spiritually in so intimate and real a fashion that he could describe it as eating his body. When the bread and wine are put into our hands, and we partake of them worthily, we have received in and through an emblematic action all that Christ's death won for us. And if we be asked, "How do you know that this is true?" we reply: first, because we have Christ's own promise for it; second, because it is vouched for by Christian experience. No other grounds of religious belief will bear being tested by the test of time and human life than these two—divine authority, which fulfils and realizes itself in the experiences of the pious soul. We can be assured of spiritual things in no other way, but in this way we can be assured of them.

The Authority of the Bible.

Unusual interest attaches to a new volume by Professor Robert Flint, of the University of Edinburgh, who is so well known through